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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# AMCITS Newsletter

## Greetings from Ambassador Jacobson

Hello and Bonjour!

I am honored by the trust President Obama has put in me by assigning me as his representative in Canada. When I was seven years old, I took my first foreign trip to Canada. As we crossed the Ambassador Bridge, my father stopped the car right in the middle so my parents in the front of the car were in Canada and we children were still in the U.S. That little boy would have never believed that one day he would become the U.S. Ambassador in Canada.



The U.S. and Canada are more closely connected than any two countries on earth. We share a common language, history, and values of peace, democracy, and liberty.

My first order of business as Ambassador is to travel across Canada, visiting each province. Over the coming weeks, I will be meeting with provincial leaders, business people, and citizens to learn more about Canada and how our two countries can work together.

As I come across interesting things in Canada (like Obama cookies and poutine), I have been writing down my impressions in my blog at <http://blogs.ottawa.usembassy.gov/ambassador/>. I welcome all of your comments and questions, so please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your warm welcome!

Best wishes,

DJ

# H1N1 Information

## What are the symptoms of seasonal influenza or 2009 H1N1 influenza?

The symptoms of seasonal and 2009 H1N1 influenza include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. Some people may be infected with the flu, including 2009 H1N1, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

## Who is at higher risk of influenza related complications?

Groups at higher risk for influenza related complications from 2009 H1N1 are similar to those at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications and include: children younger than 5 years old (risk is highest in children younger than 2 years old); adults 65 years of age and older, pregnant women, people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions (for example, asthma, diabetes, lung disease, people with weakened immune systems, etc.) and people younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy. Children 2-4 years of age are at somewhat higher risk of hospitalization from 2009 H1N1 and seasonal flu compared to older children, and for seasonal flu and have high rates of outpatient and emergency department visits for influenza.

## What is novel H1N1 (swine flu)?

Novel H1N1 (referred to as “swine flu” early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. Other countries, including Canada and Mexico, have reported people sick with this new virus. This virus is spreading from person-to-person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.



## What should I do if I get sick?

If you live in areas where people have been identified with novel H1N1 flu and become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people.

## Take everyday actions to stay healthy:

- Stay home if you get sick. Limit contacts with others to keep from infecting them.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, as germs spread that way.



**For more information on H1N1 please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>**

# H1N1 Vaccine Information

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## **What are the plans for developing 2009 H1N1 vaccine?**

Vaccines are the most powerful public health tool for control of influenza, and the U.S. government is working closely with manufacturers to take steps in the process to manufacture a 2009 H1N1 vaccine. Working together with scientists in the public and private sector, CDC has isolated the new H1N1 virus and modified the virus so that it can be used to make hundreds of millions of doses of vaccine. Vaccine manufacturers are now using these materials to begin vaccine production. Making vaccine is a multi-step process which takes several months to complete. Candidate vaccines will be tested in clinical trials over the few months.

## **When is it expected that the 2009 H1N1 vaccine will be available?**

The 2009 H1N1 vaccine is expected to be available in the fall. More specific dates cannot be provided at this time as vaccine availability depends on several factors including manufacturing time and time needed to conduct clinical trials. Will the seasonal flu vaccine also protect against the 2009 H1N1 flu?

## **The seasonal flu vaccine is not expected to protect against the 2009 H1N1 flu. Can the seasonal vaccine and the 2009 H1N1 vaccine be given at the same time?**

Inactivated 2009 H1N1 vaccine can be administered at the same visit as any other vaccine, including pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine. Live 2009 H1N1 vaccine can be administered at the same visit as any other live or inactivated vaccine EXCEPT seasonal live attenuated influenza vaccine.

## **Who will be recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine?**

CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has recommended that certain groups of the population receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine when it first becomes available. These target groups include pregnant women, people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age, healthcare and emergency medical services personnel, persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years old, and people ages of 25 through 64 years of age who are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems.

We do not expect that there will be a shortage of 2009 H1N1 vaccine, but availability and demand can be unpredictable. There is some possibility that initially the vaccine will be available in limited quantities. In this setting, the committee recommended that the following groups receive the vaccine before others: pregnant women, people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age, health care and emergency medical services personnel with direct patient contact, children 6 months through 4 years of age, and children 5 through 18 years of age who have chronic medical conditions.

The committee recognized the need to assess supply and demand issues at the local level. The committee further recommended that once the demand for vaccine for these target groups has been met at the local level, programs and providers should begin vaccinating everyone from ages 25 through 64 years. Current studies indicate the risk for infection among persons age 65 or older is less than the risk for younger age groups. Therefore, as vaccine supply and demand for vaccine among younger age groups is being met, programs and providers should offer vaccination to people over the age of 65.

**For more information on H1N1 please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>**

# Calendar of Elections

**FALL 2009 (DATE - TBA):**

**New York -**

**CD-23 Special - General Election**

**OCTOBER 20, 2009:**

**Massachusetts -**

**US Senate Special Election - Primary Filing Deadline**

**NOVEMBER 3, 2009:**

**California -**

**CD-10 Special - General Election**

**New Jersey & Virginia -**

**Gubernatorial General Election**

**NOVEMBER 24, 2009:**

**Massachusetts -**

**US Senate Special Election - Filing Deadline (Independents/Third Parties)**

**DECEMBER 8, 2009:**

**Massachusetts -**

**US Senate Special - Primary Election**

**JANUARY 19, 2010:**

**Massachusetts -**

**US Senate Special - General Election**

## **Massachusetts Voters, Submit Your Ballot Request NOW for the December 8, 2009 Special Primary!**



On **Tuesday, December 8, 2009**, Massachusetts will hold a special primary election followed by the special State election on Tuesday, January 19, 2010 to fill the vacancy left as a result of the passing of **Senator Edward M. Kennedy**. A list of candidates will be available by November 13, 2009 at: [www.sec.state.ma.us](http://www.sec.state.ma.us).

### **Request Your Ballot**

Massachusetts waives registration. Request a ballot for this election by completing and submitting a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) if you have not done so already in calendar year 2009. If you are eligible to vote in this election, and requested and received a ballot for last year's presidential election, you will automatically receive an absentee ballot, and need not take any further action unless your mailing address has changed.

The online version of the FPCA and Massachusetts' instructions on how to fill out and submit the form are available at: [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).

### **Recommended Mailing Dates for Your Ballot Request**

Although the ballot request deadline is noon on Monday, December 7, 2009, this date does not take into account mail delivery times required to receive and return your ballot by Election Day. You should mail your FPCA by the following dates to account for mail delivery times:

From Operation Enduring/Iraqi Freedom Locations/Deployed Navy Vessels: **October 9, 2009**

From Overseas Military Installations: **October 24, 2009**

From Other Overseas Locations: **October 9, 2009** (or earlier, depending on foreign mail service)

From Within the United States: **November 20, 2009**

To save transit time, send your signed FPCA directly to your local election office via fax or as an email attachment. Fax numbers and email addresses can be found at: [www.sec.state.ma.us](http://www.sec.state.ma.us). You must also submit the original FPCA by mail if you fax or email the form.

### **Receive and Return Your Ballot**

Local election officials mail ballots beginning November 13, 2009. You may not receive your blank ballot by fax or email.

### **Recommended Mailing Dates for Your Voted Ballot**

Although the deadline for your voted ballot to be received by your local election official is 8 pm on December 8, 2009, you should mail your ballot by the following dates to account for mail delivery times:

From Operation Enduring/Iraqi Freedom Locations/Deployed Navy Vessels: **November 9, 2009**

From Overseas Military Installations: **November 23, 2009**

From Other Overseas Locations: **November 9, 2009** (or earlier, depending on foreign mail service)

From Within the United States: **December 2, 2009**

To make sure your ballot arrives by the deadline, vote and return your ballot IMMEDIATELY upon receiving it! You may only return your voted ballot by mail. The ballot may not be returned electronically.

## **New York District 23 - Get Ready for the November 3, 2009 Special Election**



On **Tuesday, November 3, 2009** New York will hold a special State election to fill the congressional vacancy left by the appointment of Army Secretary John McHugh. A list of candidates will be available after October 14, 2009 at <http://www.elections.state.ny.us>.

The 23rd Congressional District includes the following counties: Clinton, Franklin, Jefferson, Hamilton, Lewis, Madison, Oswego, St. Lawrence, and parts of Essex, Fulton and Oneida Counties. Look up your voter registration and find your polling place <https://voterlookup.elections.state.ny.us/votersearch.aspx>.

### **Request Your Ballot**

If you do not have an absentee ballot request on file, you need to fill one out as soon as possible. The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) ballot application and instructions are available at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). If you are eligible to vote in this election, and requested and received a ballot for last year's presidential election, you will automatically receive an absentee ballot. You can check your registration status at <https://voterlookup.elections.state.ny.us/votersearch.aspx>. **Your absentee ballot application needs to be postmarked by October 27, 2009.**

### **Receive and Return Your Ballot**

Ballots will not be available until at the earliest **October 14, 2009**. If a list of candidates has been certified by this date, local election officials will begin mailing ballots beginning **October 14, 2009**.

Ballots must be postmarked no later than the day before **Election Day (11/2/09)** and are due back to your local election official by **November 16, 2009**.

**NOTE:** Because there are only 32 days for your ballot to reach you and for you to vote it, we are highly recommending that you use the Federal Write in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) once a list of candidates is made available. You can find an online version of the FWAB and New York instructions on how to fill out and submit the form are available at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).

**For More Information:** Go to the New York State Board of Election website at <http://www.elections.state.ny.us/> or visit FVAP at: [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).